

In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of converting messages and responses between different formats in a communication system, comprising:

providing a plurality of agents;

determining which of the agents are handicapped agents and their respective handicap;

providing at least one plug-in that implements at least one message format conversion in the communication system;

assigning the at least one plug-in to a each handicapped agent based upon their respective handicap; and

selecting a handicapped agent to respond to a message; and

activating the at least one a plug-in for the respective selected handicapped agent for converting received messages in a first format to a second format and for converting responses in the second format to the first format.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communication system has a plurality of agents and a plurality of plug-ins, and wherein the method further comprises determining for a respective agent of the plurality of agents at least one plug-in, which is assigned to the respective agent.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises the step of activating the at least one plug-in for the handicapped agent when the handicapped agent logs onto the communication system.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein a message is one of an audio message, a text message, and a

tactile message, and wherein a response is one of an audio message, a text message and a tactile message.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communication system is an automatic call distribution system.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the at least one plug-in converts based upon a common format.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of converting messages and responses between different formats in an automatic call distribution system, comprising steps of:

providing a plurality of agents and a plurality of format conversion plug-ins;

determining which of the plurality of agents are handicapped agents;

determining respective format conversion plug-ins of the plurality of format conversions plug-ins for ~~at least the~~ handicapped agents of the plurality of agents;

assigning at least one respective format conversion plug-in to the ~~a~~ respective handicapped agents of the plurality of agents;

receiving a message in a first format;
identifying the first format of the message;
selecting an agent from the plurality of agents to respond to the message;

activating, when the selected agent is the respective handicapped agent, the at least one respective format conversion plug-in for the respective handicapped agent;

converting the message from the first format to a second format; and

providing the message in the second format to the respective handicapped agent.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the method further comprises providing a response from the respective handicapped agent, the response being in the second format; converting the response from the second format to the first format; and sending the response in the first format.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the communication system is an automatic call distribution system, and wherein the method further comprises the step of activating respective plug-ins for a respective agent when the respective agent logs onto the automatic call distribution system.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein a message is one of an audio message, a text message, and a tactile message, and wherein a response is one of an audio message, a text message and a tactile message.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the communication system is an automatic call distribution system.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11 wherein the automatic call distribution system uses skill based routing and the skill set comprises conversion abilities resulting from format conversion.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing embedded computer program code for converting messages and

responses between different formats in a communication system having a plurality of agents, the computer readable media containing computer program code segments comprising:

a first computer program code segment that provides ~~at least one~~ a plurality of plug-ins that each implements at least one message format conversion in the communication system;

a second computer program code segment that determines which of the plurality of agents are handicapped agents and assigns ~~the at least one~~ respective plug-ins to a respective handicapped agents based upon their respective handicap; and

a third computer program code segment that, ~~activates~~ upon detecting a message in a first format, selects an agent and when the selected agent is a handicapped agent activates the ~~at least one~~ respective plug-in for the respective handicapped agent for converting the detected message in the first format to a second format and for converting a response in the second format to the first format.

14. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 13, wherein a message is one of an audio message, a text message, and a tactile message, and wherein a response is one of an audio message, a text message and a tactile message.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the communication system is an automatic call distribution system.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus that converts messages and responses between different formats in a communication system, comprising:

means for providing a plurality of agents and a plurality of format conversion plug-ins;

selects an agent and activates when the selected agent is a handicapped agent,

means for determining respective format conversion plug-ins of the plurality of format conversions plug-ins for ~~at least the~~ respective handicapped agents of the plurality of agents based upon each agent's respective handicap;

means for assigning at least one respective format conversion plug-in to the a respective handicapped agent of the plurality of agents;

means for receiving a message in a first format;

means for identifying the first format of the message;

means for selecting an agent from the plurality of agents to respond to the message;

means for activating, when the selected agent is the respective handicapped agent, the at least one respective format conversion plug-in for the respective handicapped agent;

means for converting the message from the first format to a second format; and

means for providing the message in the second format to the respective handicapped agent.

17. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the communication system is an automatic call distribution system.

18. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein a message is one of an audio message, a text message, and a tactile message, and wherein a response is one of an audio message, a text message and a tactile message.

19. (New) The apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the communication system routes calls to the agents based upon conversion abilities resulting from format conversion.

20. (New)The method according to claim 1 wherein skills based routing to agents is used and the skill set comprises training, abilities and conversion abilities resulting from format conversion.